



**GREEN
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GCF/B.16/11

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Report on the status of the staffing of the Secretariat

Summary

At its twelfth meeting, the Board authorized the recruitment of new staff with a view to filling approximately 100 positions by December 2016, increasing to 140 by the end of 2017, in order to build the capacity of the Secretariat.

The Secretariat has made progress in recruiting new staff and now with a current total staff count of 90 staff and 30 more positions in progress, it is possible that the approved 140 posts will be filled during 2017.

Recruiting and retaining staff continues to pose challenges, notably in terms of attracting new staff to the headquarters' location, and retention of existing staff. A number of initiatives are under way to address these challenges, including a revision of the Human resources guidelines.

Given the demands of the Secretariat's work plan, and the corresponding planned organizational structure, it is foreseen that the recruitment effort should continue at full capacity well into 2018.

In order to facilitate this, it is anticipated that the Board will be requested to consider and approve a budget for additional posts in 2018.

I. Introduction

1. The Board, by decision B.12/27, noted the need to increase the number of regular staff of the Secretariat to an approximate total of 100 filled positions by 31 December 2016 increasing to 140 by the end of 2017, taking into consideration the ability of the Secretariat to recruit and absorb the increasing staff numbers, and following the appropriate process. By the same decision, the Board allocated additional funds for staffing in the Secretariat. This has enabled the Secretariat to plan and implement a recruitment campaign to significantly increase its capacity.

2. This document presents a progress report on the staffing of the Secretariat.

II. Progress report on the staffing of the Secretariat

3. Fifty-three new staff have been appointed since the thirteenth meeting of the Board and recruitment processes are well under way for an additional thirty new positions. The Secretariat is expecting to reach 100 staff by April 2017.

Table 1. Number of staff since the twelfth meeting of the Board

	B.12	B.13	B.14	B.15	B.16
Number of staff	45	45	60	78	90
Percentage increase from B.12		0	33	73	100

Abbreviations: B.12-B.16 = twelfth, thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth meetings of the Board.

4. Following the Board's guidance, individuals who have been working as full-time consultants have been encouraged to apply for the staff positions. Twenty-six regular staff positions have been filled by former consultants since the GCF started its work, seventeen of whom have been hired since the thirteenth meeting of the Board.

5. In terms of senior posts, the Secretariat has appointed the Director of the Private Sector Facility and Director of the Division of Mitigation and Adaptation. The Adaptation and Mitigation Coordinators for the Division of Mitigation and Adaptation have also been appointed. The advertisement for the Director of Country Programming has been posted and was closed on 13 March 2017.

2.1 Increase in staffing by area of activity

6. Table 2 below indicates the progress made in building the Secretariat's capacity, by area of activity. Of the 53 new positions filled, 44 are international professional staff and 9 are administrative support staff positions.

7. The staff number under portfolio development and management has increased by 50 per cent from a staff size of 15 at the fifteenth meeting of the Board to 23 by its sixteenth meeting, although the staffing of the Private Sector Facility (which is included in this group) has remained static. Additional information on the establishment of the Portfolio Management Unit can be found in section 2.3 below.

8. The Risk Management Unit has steadily increased staff from two staff members to five with the recruitment of one more staff position in the pipeline. Hiring a further three staff will complete the team for this year.

Table 2. Staffing by area of work

Areas of activity	Current staff	In the pipeline	Total
Executive direction and management, including communications and outreach	5	1	6
Country and accredited entity relationship management and the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme	14	3	17
Portfolio development and management	23	10	33
Institutional, legal and financial/administrative support	40	13	53
Risk management, compliance and audit	8	3	11
Total	90	30	120

9. Table 3 below presents a summary of the progress in the number of staff in the operational and support divisions since the thirteenth meeting of the Board.

Table 3. Progress of staffing in operational and support divisions

Areas of activity	B.13	B.14	B.15	B.16
Operations and front office	27	22	30	42
Support	18	38	46	48
Total	45	60	76	90

Abbreviations: B.13-B.16 = thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth meetings of the Board.

10. In addition, the Secretariat has 22 international and 13 administrative consultants based at its headquarters in Songdo, Incheon, Republic of Korea, to carry out its work as defined in the work plan for 2017.

2.2 Staff by gender and geographical distribution

11. The Secretariat continues its effort to achieve geographical diversity in its workforce and to ensure that women and men are equally represented at all levels. The gender balance has improved from 79:21 (male to female ratio) at the twelfth meeting of the Board to 57:43 by the sixteenth meeting of the Board.

12. The Secretariat is currently composed of staff from 43 countries, with the nationalities most highly represented being the Republic of Korea (11 international professional staff (IS) and 11 administrative support staff (AS)), the United States of America (5 IS and 2 AS), India (6 IS) and the Philippines (3 IS and 2 AS).

13. Table 4 below provides information on the geographical and gender distribution of staff as at 22 February 2017.

Table 4. Geographical and gender distribution among appointed staff

Filled positions		Geographical distribution		Gender balance	
Level	Headcount	Developed	Developing	Male	Female
IS-level	71	28 (39%)	43 (61%)	44 (62%)	27 (38%)
AS-level	19	3 (16%)	16 (84%)	7 (37%)	12 (63%)
Total	90	31 (34%)	59 (66%)	51 (57%)	39 (43%)

Abbreviations: AS = administrative support staff, IS = international professional staff.

2.3 Portfolio management

14. One very critical area of activity is that of portfolio management. The Portfolio Management Unit (PMU) was established in December 2016 as required by decision B.09/02. This unit is developing systems (databases, formats and operational procedures) for monitoring based on approved frameworks, the Readiness and Preparatory Support Programme, accreditation master agreements, and funding proposals. The monitoring system is being designed to provide monitoring from accredited entity reports at the individual project level so that they can be aggregated to provide the GCF with an overall assessment of the project implementation status. It is also being designed to be compatible with internal monitoring systems of accredited entities to ensure consistency in data reporting.

15. PMU is reviewing accreditation master agreements, funded activity agreements, and funding proposals in particular with respect to monitoring and evaluation requirements. It is also coordinating with operational divisions to delineate the roles and responsibilities of portfolio management within the Secretariat as part of the development of an operations manual and to provide support in maximizing disbursements.

16. PMU is currently staffed with three analysts and recruitment is under way to fill positions for the Head of the Unit, and two specialists, one a senior specialist,

2.4 Recruitment and retention challenges

17. Progress on recruitment has been steady, but as reported at the fifteenth meeting of the Board, the Secretariat has suffered from an unusually high number of candidates withdrawing from the recruitment process and/or refusing offers of employment.

18. With a view to understanding this more deeply, a recruitment firm was asked to provide its assessment of the situation. In summary, the analysis is that for those candidates initially approached by the firm, 32 per cent reacted positively, with 37 per cent were not interested, and 31 per cent did not respond at all. In terms of those who reacted positively to the open position, the primary driver of interest was the GCF mandate and strategic vision. In general, the percentage of prospective candidates, who when approached by search firms expressed interest in the GCF, is lower than comparable organizations. Comparing data from similar organizations with similar roles, the analysis shows 42 per cent reacted positively, 35 per cent were not interested and 23 per cent did not respond at all.

19. There seem to be two main issues – the location of the Secretariat in Songdo and the situation of the GCF.

20. The recruitment firm reports that the location of GCF Headquarters in Songdo proved the deciding factor in 80 per cent of the cases of a candidate's withdrawal from the recruitment process. This also reflects the Secretariat's experience. The recruitment firm has further identified the following four influencing factors:

- (a) Career - the location of Songdo is not seen as a centre of public and private sector activity within the climate change, sustainability and conservation field. The fact that multilateral banks and investment banks are located elsewhere and clustered in a few major centres, highlights some perceived level of remoteness of the GCF from the current system. Many candidates feel that this location fails to provide them with regular interaction with similar colleagues in other institutions, and lacks the networking opportunities they seek;
- (b) Families - many families are not confident that Songdo will provide the facilities to fully support family life, particularly international schooling;

- (c) Environment - the environmental concerns on pollution ('yellow dust') proves particularly challenging to European candidates; and
- (d) Compensation - the overall compensation package, while comparable to that of similar organizations, is not seen to be significant enough to compensate for the other three factors as described above.
21. Regarding the situation of the GCF, many candidates have expressed concern about GCF future circumstances in the current public policy landscape.
22. The Secretariat has also received a number of resignations (eight over the past six months). The reasons for these departures are various and personal, but the general theme is that the location of GCF Headquarters in Songdo continues to be a challenge, particularly for families. This is a concern, as while hiring new staff is a very positive outcome for the Secretariat, this can be very quickly reduced if current staff leave, taking with them valuable knowledge and experience. Retention is therefore an equal, if not a greater, concern than recruitment.
23. In order to hire and retain staff, the Secretariat must offer salaries and benefits that are truly competitive within the various sectors/talent pools from which the Secretariat recruits, and which reflect the high demands and expectations that the Secretariat makes and has of its staff, particularly during this developmental stage.
24. Setting an appropriate level for the initial salary is important, but so is making sure that staff can see possibilities for salary progression and that they will be fairly rewarded for good performance. To this end, performance pay will be implemented this year. However, pay rises can be quickly eroded by rises in the cost of living and other factors, so it is equally important that salary scales are reviewed regularly.
25. Benefits such as leave, home leave, educational assistance and medical insurance play an important part in supporting the health and welfare of staff and their families, and they are strategic tools in the recruitment and retention of staff. The current benefits, which were inherited from the Asian Development Bank, are not best fitted for the Secretariat and so, in consultation with staff, they are being reviewed in the context of the revision of the Human resources guidelines.
26. The City of Incheon continues to make every effort to assist staff and their families to feel at home in Songdo by provision of its much appreciated welcome package. The latest initiative is a two-day employment workshop for spouses and partners. We remain most grateful for this assistance. The Secretariat also continues to provide support via initiatives such as the Family Working Group, and the hire of a new On-Boarding Assistant.

2.5 Coordination offices

27. During previous Board meetings there has been an exchange of views about strengthening the structure of the Secretariat and the country ownership mandate. In particular, interest has been expressed in creating a stronger regional presence as this provides direct services to countries and would be more effective than working from a remote location.
28. An example of this could be offices in a limited number of locations across the globe. The primary benefit would be that the GCF would be closer to its countries, partners, entities and stakeholders in general, further realizing the country-driven nature of its mission. In a practical sense, this would mean that the Secretariat would be able to provide more systematic and relevant assistance in response to the increasing and understandable demands of its country partners. Coordination offices could also offer some staff an opportunity to work at, or closer to home, which would be a strong recruitment and retention factor.

29. Strengthening GCF presence in other countries could also assist the efforts of the GCF to gain the usual privileges and immunities that intergovernmental organizations require in order to carry out their responsibilities.



Annex: Draft decision of the Board

The Board, having considered document GCF/B.16/11 titled “Report on the status of the staffing of the Secretariat”:

Notes the contents of the report.
